

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
JUDICIARY Committee

WITNESS STATEMENT

PLEASE PRINT

NAME Theresa Moran BILL NO. HB 252

ADDRESS 158 Ricketts Rd DATE 2-16-09
Hamilton, MT 59840

WHOM DO YOU REPRESENT? Citizen

SUPPORT: OPPOSE _____ AMEND _____

COMMENTS:

I am here to urge you to vote for HB 252 out of committee, adding the language of sexual orientation and gender identity to our current law that protects against discrimination is a Civil Right. A Civil right that provides our children, our citizens from prejudices and discrimination just as they have protection for race, gender and religion. I would like to read ^{a statement from} Tammy Baldwin, Congress woman from Wisconsin, from Crisis. "I grapple with the issue of education in my own work on the Employment Non-Discrimination Act and the struggle to pass a bill that includes protection for transgender people. How do I educate my colleagues about transgender 101? Many are now comfortable with protecting people based on sexual orientation, but we haven't gone the same distance on transgender issues. When I think of the parents of young children dealing with gender identity issues—something Barbara Walters presented so movingly in a 2007 20/20 segment—I know we must help ensure that these children are protected as well.

When she learned I was gay, one thing my grandmother felt was afraid. She wasn't sure how the world had changed and didn't want me to be, the experiment to see how far it had gotten. I don't want parents to feel they must tell their children not to be who they are in order to keep them safe. I want them to know that the healthiest thing they can say is,

"Be who you are, and we'll work to make the world safer together."

So in conclusion, I urge you to pass HB252 out of committee as protecting our children and citizens from discrimination is the right thing to do.